

CCBS – LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

27/01/2017 - 03/02/2017



Northern Ireland
Assembly

The Northern Ireland Assembly was dissolved at 00:01 on Thursday 26 January 2017.

The elections will take place on Thursday 2 March 2017.



Thursday 2 February 2017

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Willie Penrose asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if, in the context of the recent announcement by the British Prime Minister which indicates the UK's attitude to Brexit negotiations, he has taken steps to review the impact that such a decision would have on the agri-food industry and especially the beef industry; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Michael Creed: The recent announcement by Prime Minister May, while providing some further clarity in relation to the UK approach to the forthcoming negotiations, still leaves considerable uncertainty in relation to the likely course of the exit negotiations and the negotiations on the future EU-UK relationship. As such, the review of the potential impact on the agri-food sector, including the beef sector, that has been conducted by my Department, remains valid, in that it has taken into account the possibility of a so-called 'hard' Brexit.

The extent of the East-West and North-South trading relationships, and the fact that the UK is the natural first step for agri-food businesses moving into the exporting arena for the first time, means that the agri-food sector is particularly exposed not only to the more short-term impacts arising from the fall in the value of sterling against the euro, but also to the medium-long term impacts that will arise from changes to the EU-UK trading relationship, to regulations and standards, to origin labelling, to border controls and certification, and to the related areas of veterinary and health certification.

The Government remains very focused on supporting the agri-food industry, and the beef sector, through the challenges ahead. I will continue to consult with the industry as the negotiations develop, and I will continue to press Ireland's case for continued free access to the UK market, without tariffs and with minimal additional customs and administrative procedures.

Source: <https://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2017-02-02a.43&s=north-south#g45.r>

Thursday 2 February 2017

Department of Justice and Equality

Michael McGrath asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the legal basis of the common travel area between Ireland and the United Kingdom and its relationship with EU law; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

Frances Fitzgerald: The Common Travel Area has been in existence since Irish independence and has its origin in the close historic relationship between Ireland and the UK. While not addressed in a discrete piece of legislation, or one formal agreement, both jurisdictions have made administrative and legal provisions over many years as necessary to give effect to its operation. Of particular note, insofar as Irish legislation is concerned, are the long-standing provisions in Irish law whereby UK nationals are not treated as 'aliens' or 'non-nationals' for the purposes of immigration law (most recently provided for in the Immigration Act 1999 and the Aliens (Amendment (No.2) Order 1999), as well as the provisions governing the exercise of entry controls whereby an Irish immigration officer can refuse permission to enter the State to a non-national if the immigration officer is satisfied that the person intends to travel (whether immediately or not) to Great Britain or Northern Ireland and would not qualify for admission there if he or she arrived there from a place other than the State (section 4 (3) (h) of the Immigration Act 2004). Also of note are the provisions both jurisdictions made following Ireland's exit from the Commonwealth in 1948 which facilitated the continued enjoyment of reciprocal rights and privileges for citizens of both jurisdictions.

As the Deputy will be aware, Protocol 20 to the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union recognises that "the UK and Ireland may continue to make arrangements between themselves relating to the movement of persons between their territories (the Common Travel Area)". Operation of the Common Travel Area takes full account of EU law and, while it is Ireland's intention to maintain and enhance cooperation with the UK in relation to general immigration and border enforcement following its exit from the UK, Ireland of course remains a

committed member of the European Union and will continue to uphold the right of free movement for all EU citizens after the UK 's departure.

Source: <https://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2017-02-02a.92&s=border#g94.r>